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**RIVERBANK MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO DISTRIBUTING AND  
RECEIVING IMAGES DEPICTING THE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF MINORS**

FRESNO - United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that JOSEPH ANTHONY CASTIGLIONE, 29, of Riverbank, California, pleaded guilty before United States District Judge Lawrence J. O'Neill to distributing and receiving visual depictions of the sexual exploitation of minors. He agreed his sentence will include a prison term of 151 months followed by a term of supervised release for the rest of his life which typically restricts a defendant's access to children and the internet.

This case was investigated by the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

The investigation in this case was undertaken as part of Project Safe Childhood (PSC). PSC is a United States Department of Justice initiative established to increase federal prosecutions of violent sexual predators of children, and to reduce the number of Internet crimes against children including child pornography trafficking. As a part of PSC, the United States Attorney's Office has teamed with state and local agencies and organizations to increase law enforcement presence on the Internet, and to educate the public about safe Internet use, thereby reducing the risk that children might fall prey to online sexual predators. For additional information on the PSC initiative, please go to [www.projectsafefchildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafefchildhood.gov) or call the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of California and ask to speak with the PSC coordinator.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Sheila Oberto, who prosecuted the case, CASTIGLIONE admitted, as part of his plea agreement, that from May 17, 2006, through January 8, 2007, in Stanislaus County, he used a computer and modem to distribute and receive, via the Internet, visual depictions of the sexual exploitation of minors. The distribution involved material depicting prepubescent minors as well as images of minors engaged in sadistic or masochistic conduct or other violence. The offense involved more than 600 images.

CASTIGLIONE will be sentenced on August 24, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. before Judge O'Neill. He faces a maximum prison term of 20 years, a fine of up to \$250,000, and a lifetime of supervised release. However, the actual sentence will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables, and any applicable statutory sentencing factors. CASTIGLIONE was remanded into custody following entry of his guilty plea.